

Look Who's Tweeting

(Dragonfly)

Submitted at 1/14/2009 11:24:50 AM

You've heard of blogging, but have you heard of microblogging? Twitter, the most popular microblogging platform, is a place on the web where people give updates on their lives by answering the question "What are you doing?" in 140 characters or less. The character limit makes it "micro." Is this a practical way to share information? Is it a colossal waste of time? You'll be the judge of that! Here are a few reasons to give Twitter a chance, along with some basic instructions for getting started.

- Community. Even if you are the only person for miles around who does what you do, Twitter can make you feel like you have an office full of colleagues. Suddenly you'll have a whole community of people who understand why you get so excited about new MeSH headings! By keeping tabs on how other librarians spend their everyday lives, I find colleagues who are working on similar projects and wrestling with similar ideas. Of course, not all "tweets" are serious and work-related. Twitter also helps me get to know my colleagues as people. Knowing something about a Twitter contact's hobbies or sense of humor helps to break the ice when I meet that person face-to-face.

- Quicker than blogging. A good, thoughtful blog post takes a long time to compose. With Twitter, you can share a quick thought without feeling pressured to add a lengthy commentary. Twitter rules mandate that you cut to the chase! With a 140-character limit, you will quickly learn how to be concise.

- Other creative uses. Twitter users are really inventive! Libraries use Twitter as a newsletter, as a collaboration tool, and even to support reference service. Qwitter and TweetWhatYouEat help to promote healthy lifestyles. Twitter has even been used successfully to raise funds for good causes.

Here's how to get started:

1. Go to twitter.com and sign up for a free account.
2. Post your first update! This was mine:
3. Find some people or groups to follow. Start by following the medlibs, the GroupTweet for Medical Libraryfolk. This group is 126 members strong and moderated by eagledawg, a familiar face around here.

Follow the National Institutes of Health on Twitter to receive updates about health research and/or funding information.

You can also find people to follow on Twitter by searching for their names or linking your Twitter account to your e-mail contacts list. If you want to know who's tweeting about, say, healthcare, Twitter Search will give you a nice sampling.

4. Choose how you would like to send and receive tweets. I use the Firefox extension Twitterfox so I can see tweets in my browser without having to leave a tab open for twitter.com. Twhirl and friendfeed are two other options for managing tweets.

5. Season to taste. There is no reason to let keeping up with Twitter updates become a burden to you. It may take some time before you find the right mix of feeds to follow. Jessamyn at librarian.net recently

shared some guidelines for striking the right balance.

The Lingo:

Tweet - a tweet is a post or a message on Twitter.

@ - Typing the '@' symbol in a tweet before someone's Twitter username indicates that you are responding to something that person tweeted earlier. Your tweet will be still be public. Here is an example:

D for Direct Message - Typing 'D' in a tweet before someone's Twitter username sends a private message to that person. The Twitter group medlibs works with direct messages. Once you become a follower of medlibs, medlibs will follow you back. To tweet something to the entire medlibs group, send a direct message. For example:

RT or Retweet - Add 'RT' to your tweet as a courtesy when you are reposting someone else's tweet. For example:

Tinyurl - Long, messy URLs can eat up your 140 character limit very quickly. Use a service such as [tinyurl](http://tinyurl.com) or shrinkify to reduce the length of those URLs before posting them in your tweets.

— If you've been skeptical of Twitter, I hope this post convinces you to give it a try. Leave a comment to let us know what you think.

Additional Resources:

Twitter in Plain English- a must-see!

Twittering the Plenary of the Medical Library Association Meeting
A Doctor's Opinion: Why I Started Microblogging on Twitter

Rendezvous Roundup: Community Assessment CE and Upcoming Spring Schedule

(Dragonfly)

Submitted at 1/7/2009 1:16:23 PM

Next Wednesday, January 14th, 2009 at 1 pm Pacific time, is the beginning of our Community Assessment Rendezvous class series for 4 units of Medical Library Association continuing education credit for registered participants. For more details about the Community Assessment class, including an updated agenda, please visit

<http://nnlm.gov/pnr/training/CommunityAssessment.html> and register at <http://tinyurl.com/RendezvousReg>. Space is limited to 25 students and filling fast!

Save the dates for these upcoming RML Rendezvous sessions, with more details and reminders announced closer to the dates:

February 18, 2009 at 1 PM Pacific time - Emergency Services Continuity with Dan Wilson, Coordinator for the National Network/Libraries of Medicine (NN/LM) National Emergency Preparedness & Response plan.

March 25, 2009 at 1 PM Pacific time - PubMed Update with Linda Milgrom, NN/LM Pacific Northwest Region (PNR) Outreach Coordinator

April 15, 2009 at noon Pacific time - Scholarly Communication with Alison Aldrich, NN/LM PNR Technology Outreach Coordinator

May 2009 - on break for the Medical Library Association conference.

We look forward to having you join us!

(Fire)Wallflowers Invited to Dance?

(Dragonfly)

Submitted at 1/27/2009 3:59:53 PM

If you work in a hospital library, you probably don't need me to tell you that hospital IT departments frequently block Web 2.0 applications due to concerns about privacy, security, and/or productivity.

As a result, hospital librarians have had precious little freedom to experiment with using blogs, wikis, and other social media to improve communication and enhance service. Here is some evidence to suggest that the rules are (just maybe) starting to relax.

- A great many physicians, nurses, pharmacists, healthcare IT specialists, and hospital administrators are

bloggers themselves and are no doubt realizing the value of Web 2.0 for professional development and communication. See Medworm for a categorized list of blogs. Life as a Healthcare CIO and the Healthcare IT Guy are two I've been reading lately.

- Physician social networks such as Sermo and Medscape Physician Connect are flourishing.

- On his new blog Found in Cache, Hospital IT Manager Ed Bennett posted an impressive list of hospitals using the social networking tools Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube for marketing and communication. There are 153 hospitals on the list.

- Two weeks ago, surgeons at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit live tweeted a robotic surgery.

This is all well and good, but what does it mean for you? For advice on negotiating your way around firewalls and blocked content, read this article by Medical Library Association (MLA) Past President Mark Funk: Getting Beyond the Blocks

The advice is intended for leaders of professional organizations, but much of it applies to individuals as well.

Some additional suggestions:

- Don't stereotype. Not all librarians are sour-faced women with buns and glasses who enjoy shushing people all day. Similarly, not all IT professionals are clones of Nick Burns: Computer Guy. Don't automatically assume conversations with them will be difficult or

intimidating.

- Be clear about what you want and how it supports what you do. If you don't know what you want to do, sign up for a Web 2.0 Distance Learning class and request temporary access to the tools covered in the class. Geeks Bearing Gifts Online will be offered in the PNR again later this year. MLA is offering some free Short Courses on Web 2.0 as well. Here is a list of MLA Sections, SIGS, and Chapters using Web 2.0 for communication.

I've avoided blogging about this topic because there are no easy answers! You hospital librarians out there? You are the experts. Please share your tips for negotiating with IT staff and working behind firewalls.

Internet Cool Tools for Physicians: A Book Review

(Dragonfly)

Submitted at 1/20/2009 2:18:37 PM

Internet Cool Tools for Physicians
by Melissa L. Rethlefsen, David L. Rothman, and Daniel S. Mojon
Springer, 2009

Given how rapidly things change on the Web, writing a book about Internet tools seems like a risky endeavor. Will the content still be relevant once the book makes it to press? Rethlefsen, Rothman, and Mojon took on this challenge and produced the very relevant Internet Cool Tools for Physicians, a manual for physicians and others who want to understand how to use the Internet to discover, manage, and organize information.

The book covers topics such as blogs, wikis, RSS, personal health records, social bookmarking, social networking, and collaboration tools. It includes search strategies for PubMed, third-party PubMed tools, and Google. Perhaps not accidentally, the book is structured like a point-of-care resource. Each chapter is preceded by a bulleted list of Core Messages. The chapters themselves

are very brief and divided into easily scannable subsections.

If you consider yourself to be already knowledgeable about Cool Tools, read the book anyway. You are bound to discover at least a few sites that are new to you. Ever heard of Twidla? What about Ozmosis? Many librarians struggle to find ways to talk with people about Web 2.0 tools and how to integrate them into a daily information management routine. This book provides good examples of talking points that resonate with physicians.

The chapter on PubMed offers solid, detailed advice for clinicians who are searching the biomedical journal literature themselves. As luck would have it, though, PubMed's interface is about to change rather dramatically, and once it does, many of the screenshots and instructions in this chapter will be out of date. Use this situation as an opportunity to promote your skills as an information professional. If you add the book to your library's collection, insert a note in the PubMed chapter about upcoming changes, and encourage readers to contact the library staff for

help. To make sure you are up to speed on the changes, tune in to the RML Rendezvous on March 25 for a PubMed Update from Linda Milgrom.

To summarize: Internet Cool Tools for Physicians is a succinct but comprehensive resource about online searching, information management, and social media for healthcare providers. Given the topic, this first edition should have a reasonably long shelf life (please pardon the pun) because the authors made wise choices when deciding which tools to highlight. Librarians should consider using Cool Tools as a conversation-starter when talking with clinicians about the emerging Web.

Internet Cool Tools for Physicians retails for about \$30.00 and is available from your book vendor of choice. A copy is also available in the NN/LM PNR Lending Library. To borrow it, please send email to: nnlm@u.washington.edu. To view the entire collection, see the NN/LM PNR Lending Library.

Congratulations to Technology Improvement Awardees (Dragonfly)

Submitted at 1/26/2009 12:23:40 PM

Congratulations to Kootenai Medical Center, Northern Rockies Rural Health Clinic, and Bastyr University. These three network member organizations were recently awarded funding for technology improvement projects. Read on to learn more about their exciting plans.

Mobile Clinical Library Program /
Satellite Librarian Program
Kootenai Medical Center
Coeur d'Alene, ID

The Satellite Librarian Program will address the information needs of the medical staff at Kootenai Medical Center by providing research, reference and instructional services in the physicians' lounge area via a mobile technology unit with a laptop computer, printer, projector and cart.

The Mobile Clinical Librarian Program will be a partnership with KMC's Intensivist and Hospitalist teams. Librarians will use the mobile technology unit to answer questions at the point of care while participating in rounds with the physicians.

Up To Speed/Implementing Equipment for a Rural Health Clinic in Montana to Enable Seamless Patient Information Transfer

Northern Rockies Rural Health Clinic
Cut Bank, MT

This award will allow clinical staff at the Northern Rockies Rural Health Clinic (NRRHC) timely access to accurate health information regarding patient care and will equip NRRHC for full participation in the Health Information Exchange of Montana. Computers will be placed at the nursing stations and the physician offices within the NRRHC clinic. The project will enable the healthcare providers to access, review, and document patient information efficiently. A scanner will be used to convert paper-based medical records into an electronic record format.

Mobile Library Outreach System
Bastyr University
Kenmore, WA

This award will enable the Bastyr library professional staff to provide information outreach to practitioners and health consumers at the Bastyr Center for Natural Health and at numerous other community centers and clinics. This outreach will require a mobile workstation which is to include a portable LCD projector, laptop computer, wireless mouse, laser pointer, portable projection screen, and portable table.

Geeks Bearing Gifts Distance Learning Opportunity - FREE

(Dragonfly)

Submitted at 1/16/2009 2:39:16 PM

Geeks Bearing Gifts: Unwrapping New Technology Trends
Free Online Learning Opportunity
February 2 to March 20, 2009

The Pacific Northwest RML is now accepting registrants for the online version of "Geeks Bearing Gifts: Unwrapping New Technology Trends." We are offering this course free of charge as a benefit to our Network members.

UPDATE 1/23/09: The February-March class is now full. Contact Alison to have your name added to a waiting list for the next time this course is offered.

Geeks Bearing Gifts provides an introduction to today's hottest technology trends with an emphasis on social media and collaboration. Participants will gain hands-on

experience with RSS, blogs and wikis, social bookmarking and more.

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

- Identify technology trends and understand how these trends will affect or can be integrated into traditional library services.
- Understand the precepts of the social web (i.e. Web 2.0, Library 2.0).
- Recognize, evaluate, select, and use web-based tools for dissemination of information and online collaboration.

This seven week long distance learning opportunity includes a course website you may access at any time to complete readings, forum discussions and assignments at your own pace. Additionally, there will be three real-time teleconferences held via Adobe Connect.

The introductory session will be held on Tuesday, February 3 from 1-2

PM PT. This session will introduce Moodle, the platform upon which the class is hosted. The mid-session teleconference will be held on Tuesday February 24 from 1-2 PM PT. The class wrap-up teleconference (required) will be scheduled during the week of March 16. Participants will have until March 31 to complete their assignments.

Upon completion of this class, participants will be eligible for 8 hours of MLA CE credit. If you have previously completed the in-person version of Geeks Bearing Gifts for 4 CE credits, you may take the online version for an additional 4 credits.

The course is limited to 20 participants with priority given to staff at PNR Network member institutions.

Please contact Alison Aldrich, aldrich3@u.washington.edu or 206-221-3489, with any questions.

Go Local Montana - Up and Running in the Pacific Northwest!

(Dragonfly)

Submitted at 1/15/2009 2:53:23 PM

NN/LM Pacific Northwest Region is pleased to announce that Go Local Montana is now live! This is the first live Go Local project in our region and we couldn't be more pleased. Montana Go Local is a project of the

Voices of Hope with partners 2-1-1/First Call for Help District XI Human Resources Council, 2-1-1/First Call for Help United Way, Montana State Library, and The Help Center. The site is possible thanks to the dedication and hard work of Jackie Fitzgerald. Voices of Hope would like to send a special thanks to

Susie McIntyre for initiating the project. More promotion of the site will follow in the coming months, but you can take a peek at: <http://medlineplus.gov/montana>. Congratulations to the entire Go Local Montana team!

Presentations About Presentations

(Dragonfly)

Submitted at 2/3/2009 4:13:43 PM

Are you looking for ways to enhance the visual aids in your face-to-face and online presentations? Here are two great presentations about presentations.

Using Slides Effectively in Communications

by Nancy Duarte, CEO, Duarte Design

Bored with bullet points? Cranky about clip art? Learn how to “pimp your slides” to make them better looking and more effective aids for conveying your message. Nancy Duarte really knows her stuff! Duarte Design worked with Al Gore to develop his presentation for An Inconvenient Truth.

This presentation is the most recent

episode in the Northwest Center for Public Health Practice’s Hot Topics in Preparedness series of webcasts. It played to a packed house here at the UW Health Sciences Library and is now available as a recording you can watch from your computer.

See also Duarte’s new book, slide:ology, and her blog of the same name. Roadmap for Creating a Successful Flash Video

by Kami Griffiths, Lori Pottinger, and Colin Carpenter

This is one of many great resources from TechSoup, an organization dedicated to developing the technological capacity of non-profits. I read about this presentation on the MaintainIT Project blog.

Pottinger and Carpenter work for the International Rivers organization in Berkeley, California. They used

Adobe Flash to produce a compelling video using still images, text, and music. The video, We All Live Downstream, was runner up in Tech Soup and Adobe’s Show Your Impact contest last year.

If you are interesting in producing a similar video for your organization, the presentation and resources linked from this page will help you get started. The first fifteen minutes of the presentation are about how to select images and develop an effective script. In the second fifteen minutes, Carpenter demonstrates the basic mechanics of using Adobe Flash. At about 30 minutes into the presentation, there is a discussion of non-Flash alternatives that can be used to achieve similar effects.